



U.S. Department of Justice

Channing D. Phillips
**Acting United States Attorney for
the District of Columbia**

*Judiciary Center
555 Fourth Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20530*

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, July 29, 2009

For Information Contact:

Public Affairs

John Roth (202) 514-6893

<http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/dc>

Former U.S. Foreign Service Officer sentenced for accepting illegal gratuities and international jeweler sentenced for illegal supplementation of a government salary

WASHINGTON - A Former U.S. Foreign Service Officer, Michael John O'Keefe, Sr., 62, of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and an international jeweler, Sunil Agrawal, 50, of New York, New York, were sentenced before the Honorable Paul L. Friedman today on related charges, Acting U.S. Attorney Channing D. Phillips and U.S. Department of State Diplomatic Security Service (DSS) Acting Director Patrick D. Donovan announced.

O'Keefe, a 22-year veteran of the State Department was employed at the U.S. Consulate in Toronto, Canada, as the Deputy Non-Immigrant Visa Chief. He pled guilty to one count of accepting an illegal gratuity on February 25, 2009. O'Keefe was sentenced to twelve months and one day of incarceration, to be followed by one year of supervised release, and ordered to forfeit \$5000 worth of cash and jewelry.

Agrawal, who is the Chief Executive Officer of STS Jewels, Inc., an international manufacturer and distributor of semi-precious gems with offices in New York and worldwide, pled guilty to one count of supplementing the salary of O'Keefe on February 25, 2009. Agrawal was sentenced to a \$100,000 fine, and 18 months of supervised probation, to include 100 hours of community service, among other conditions. The \$100,000 fine, which represents one of the largest fines imposed in this District for this offense, has already been paid by Agrawal.

According to the evidence presented before and during the sentencing hearing, from before February 1, 2004, and continuing through August 18, 2006, O'Keefe received and accepted from Agrawal round trip airline tickets between Toronto, Canada, and Las Vegas for O'Keefe and exotic dancers; hotel accommodations and expenses in New York for O'Keefe and two of the exotic dancers; and hotel accommodations and expenses in Las Vegas for O'Keefe and three exotic dancers; jewelry; expensive meals; and entertainment. O'Keefe scheduled expedited interviews for and issued visas to 21 persons sponsored by STS Jewels.

Agrawal provided the above listed items as supplementation of O'Keefe's salary.

In announcing his sentences, the Court recognized the public trust that was violated by O'Keefe's actions as a public official and the harm to the reputation of the State Department.

In announcing today's sentences, Acting U.S. Attorney Phillips and DSS Acting Director Donovan commended the work of Diplomatic Security Service Special Agents, especially Special Agents Calvin Sherstan, Jeffrey Ford, Blake Hayes, Kendall Beels, Margalit Murray and Former DSS Special Agent John Wilbur; the Consular Officers of the Bureau of Consular Affairs; staff at the U.S. Consulate in Toronto; and the Vulnerabilities and Assessment Unit, the Computer Investigations and Forensics Branch, and the Visa and Passport Analysis Unit, all of the Department of State. They also commended IT Specialist Joseph Calvarese, Paralegal Nadia Arnett Snoddy and the entire National Security Section Support Staff as well as Assistant U.S. Attorneys Brenda J. Johnson and Denise Cheung of the National Security Section who prosecuted the case.

###